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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 CHENGDU 000285

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DEPT FOR EAP/CM AND INR

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [CH](#) [SOCI](#)

SUBJECT: ENCOUNTER WITH SOUTHWEST CHINA PROPAGANDA OFFICIAL

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CLASSIFIED BY: James A. Boughner, Consul General, U.S. Consulate General, Chengdu, China.

REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: Openly disparaging of the Communist Party's standard propaganda manual, a young Kunming City propaganda department official in southwest China told us of his hopes to work his way up to a comfortable job in a state enterprise. Among other "pearls of wisdom," the widely available propaganda manual highlights the importance of careful management of the internet to prevent foreign "ideological infiltration and notes that "feeding propaganda" to foreigners should be approached differently than internal agitprop. End summary.

¶2. (C) A Kunming, Yunnan Province Communist Party Committee Propaganda Department official introduced himself to Congenoff, whom he had noticed reading the 2003 Red Flag Press book "Practical Manual for Party Propaganda Work" during one of our recent trips to the city. The worker volunteered the book was too abstract and divorced from the practicalities of everyday propaganda work. He remarked that his ideological studies had made him skilled in analyzing arguments to see the "naked interests that lay underneath their ideological clothing."

¶3. (C) The official, in his late twenties, said he had received a degree in computer science and then worked for Hitachi in Japan for three years. Back in Kunming, he found the local job market tough but eventually latched onto a position with the Kunming City Party Committee Propaganda Department. His eventual goal was to get a job at a state-run company. His ideal job, he said, would be to work for the tobacco monopoly, a very large and profitable state enterprise.

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Highlights of 2003 "Practical Manual for Party Propaganda Work"

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¶4. (SBU) This 2003 Red Flag Publishing House, purchased at the Kunming Xinhua Bookstore is also widely available online. Hu Jintao in his foreword to the book wrote "If the masses are not

guided by a scientific theory as the push forward social change, they cannot succeed... As times change our thinking and understanding too must move forward~ the theoretical basis of the Party, must based on what we have inherited from the past constantly absorb new experiences and new thinking." In the first section of the "Propaganda Manual" Hu Jintao and others expound on the "Three Represents" of former Party Secretary Jiang Zemin.

15. (SBU) As the propaganda worker warned, the book, and especially the first section, is very dull reading. The next sections on the theory, purposes and methods of Party propaganda work are more enlightening.

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Goals of Party Propaganda  
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16. (U) The goal of Party propaganda is to mold generation after generation of new socialist people. (p. 80)

-- Insist on positiveness in propaganda. News reporting should hold to the positiveness principle by handling properly the balance praise and exposing problems. In any case, reader should be left with feelings of encouragement, trust, courage and hope. (p. 82 - 82)

-- Party propaganda must serve the purposes of the Party center and give guidance to the people (p. 82)

-- Propaganda should saturate society. The object of a propaganda message needs to get the message continually and from many different sources including books, movies, periodicals and

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the Internet. The experience of the Party shows that messages from many sources re-enforce one another. Different people and groups need to get the message in a way that is suitable for them. (pp. 88 - 89)

-- The Internet has an ever greater impact on people's thinking. People outside mainland China are always plotting ways to infiltrate China ideologically. We need to strengthen our management of news websites and other websites.

-- Make clear to everyone that development is the number one task for China and the Party. Development is the key to solving all the problems facing China today. Ideological awareness and strength is an important dimension of China's overall national strength. (p. 98)

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Methods of Party Propaganda  
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17. (U) Preparing the masses for a change in the Party line is an art form. The change must be subtle and gradual so as not to upset people, always keeping in mind the capacity of the masses to accept change. With changes in the line, propaganda intensifies so that it penetrates everywhere. (pp. 107 - 108)

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Propagandizing Foreigners  
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18. (U) Feeding propaganda to foreigners is done differently from domestic propaganda work. The first task is learning about your propaganda target, keeping in mind that the targets of foreign propaganda are different from the targets of domestic propaganda. The approach will also vary according to the country or area of the person.

-- Take a subtler and gentler approach. Present facts and let them draw their own conclusions. Explain what the foreigner doesn't understand, even over simplifying if necessary. Avoid using propaganda slogans or saying things that might cause disagreement.

-- Make use of visitors to China to spread the propaganda message overseas. Be sure to give the foreigners only what they can accept. Take care that what they see and their experiences in China will, when they return home, help to build an image of China in the minds of the people of the world. (p. 118)

-- Other methods include arranging interviews for the friendly foreign press, submitting articles to Xinhua and other Chinese publications aimed at foreign audiences and attention to the positiveness of TV programming on the closed circuit TV system of hotels frequented by foreigners. (pp. 118 - 119)

-- Make sister city agreements with foreign cities.

-- Plan tourist group itineraries so visitors will get a positive impression of China.

---Arrange for tour group guides and interpreters to subscribe to foreign language Chinese magazines destined for foreign audiences.

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Religion  
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19. (U) While respecting the principle of religious freedom, strengthen education of the masses, and of young people in particular, in dialectical materialism. As Lenin said, religion

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and foolishness are the deepest roots of religion. Thus the roots of religion will last for a long time to come. We have no alternative but to implement a policy of religious freedom and not of compulsion. Through education in socialist culture and civilization, we will weaken the roots of religion. The role of Party propaganda is to uphold the rights of both believers and non-believers and not allow religion to be used to harm the country.

-- In recent years, there has been some propaganda that does not comply with the Party's religion policy that has offended believers. We should not use words that offend believers. If in doubt about whether propaganda is too sensitive, contact the United Front Department [Tongzhanbu] for advice.

-- Religion is a particularly sensitive topic in international affairs. We should be especially careful to correctly present the Party's policy on religion to foreigners.

-- Religious publications should be closely controlled. Foreign publications are not allowed. Literature and art works should treat religious matters properly. (pp. 124 - 125)

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## Nationalities

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¶10. (U) The top priority is to uphold the principle of unity of all China's nationalities.

--- It is essential not to equate the reasonable demands for autonomy under the Party's minorities policy with splittism.

-- Throughout the entire country, propaganda should stress that the unity of the Han nationality and of the national minorities.

--- While minority people should be encouraged to learn Chinese, minority languages should be respected and promoted. (p. 125 - 126)

¶11. (U) The concluding section on the art of making speeches discusses not only Mao Zedong but also Ronald Reagan and Lincoln's Second Inaugural. (pp. 237, 242).  
BOUGHNER